

Dear Families/Caregivers,

In order to effectively navigate the world, understand the range of human experiences, and relate with others, students must learn to empathize with others. Being empathetic promotes trust, which leads to positive relationships built on open and honest communication.

Active listening is listening to another person with empathy. Often, we listen to respond. Before the other person is even finished talking, we start thinking about what we are going to say in response. This isn't really listening! We must practice active listening to make the other person feel heard and understood.

Strategies for ACTIVE Listening include:

Pay full **ATTENTION**.

Show you **CARE**.

TUNE IN to the person.

IDENTIFY with the person.

VALIDATE the person's feelings.

ENGAGE and ask questions.

Spend time actively listening to your teen about his or her thoughts and feelings. Encourage your teen to listen to others with empathy. When watching TV or a movie together, notice when and if the characters are actively listening to one another.

You don't have to have experienced what another person is going through to be empathetic. Empathy is being willing to look at a situation from another person's perspective.